



SIERRA CLUB REPORT

# Transforming Transportation in New York

*Roadmaps to a Transportation Climate Target for 2035*

Despite having the most ambitious climate plan in the nation pass this summer, the State of New York is still lagging on setting any sector-specific targets to curb transportation emissions. It's time for Governor Cuomo to set a statewide interim target by executive action to reduce on-road transportation emissions 55% by 2035. This is a practicable and achievable target that will ensure New York is on track to meet its 2050 net-zero emission commitments.

On behalf of the Sierra Club, Synapse Energy Economics modeled three scenarios to evaluate the impacts of incremental policies on vehicle electrification and GHG reductions, as well as the public health and economic benefits that would result from implementing these policies. These scenarios projected a business as usual case, an electrification-only case focused on increasing electric vehicle adoption and an electrification with mode-shifting case of electric vehicle adoption alongside reductions in vehicle miles travelled.

# **This analysis has 6 major findings, and highlights the clear need for New York to commit to bold, ambitious policy solutions that will reduce on-road emissions 55% by 2035.**

## **(1) New York is not on track to achieve the needed reductions in the transportation sector to meet Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) commitments.**

- With the projected rate of technological progress and existing policies, New York's on road emissions will decrease 38% by 2035 — this trajectory puts New York far short of its goal of near complete decarbonization of the sector by 2050.

## **(2) Reducing on-road transportation emissions by 55% by 2035 will put New York on track to meet its CLCPA goals and can be achieved with known and available policies.**

- Through a set of policy levers, including increasing rebates for electric vehicles to spur their adoption could make up 88% of all new LDVs by 2035 sold in New York and New York could achieve 45% greater emissions reductions than the BAU case.
- There are multiple pathways to achieving 55% by 2035, both through rapid and widespread electrification, or through pairing reductions from electrification with mode-shifting through expanded and electrified public and active transportation alternatives, equitable transit oriented development, and other tools that could reduce VMT.

## **(3) Implementing policies to meet this goal will result in huge public health, environmental, and economic benefits to New York.**

- Electrifying New York's vehicles by 2035 and reducing VMT by 7.5% could help prevent 178 premature deaths, 102,400 avoided lost work days, \$1.8 billion in monetized health benefits and \$30 billion saved on petroleum, compared to a business as usual scenario.

## **(4) Acting quickly is essential given slow vehicle fleet turnover.**

- 53% of all light duty vehicles sold in New York in 2020 will still be on the road in 2035; New York must act now to implement policies that will reshape the vehicle fleet in the coming decade and beyond.

## **(5) Clean transportation policies must prioritize equity.**

- The distribution of both benefits and costs must be implemented with an equity lens. This includes prioritizing reductions of health-damaging emissions in communities that have been disproportionately burdened by tailpipe pollution and improving clean transportation options in these communities.

## **(6) Supporting the move to electric vehicles is essential.**

- Achieving significant reductions will require rapid, widespread transportation electrification. This will necessitate support from state agencies, municipalities, the private sector, and utilities. Support for policies that encourage electric vehicles over conventional vehicles, result in the build-out of publicly accessible charging infrastructure, and promote less driving overall will be essential. Furthermore, policies must ensure electrification happens across all vehicle types, not just light-duty vehicles.